'The Dynamics of Adult Learning, Group Facilitation and Conflict Resolution'
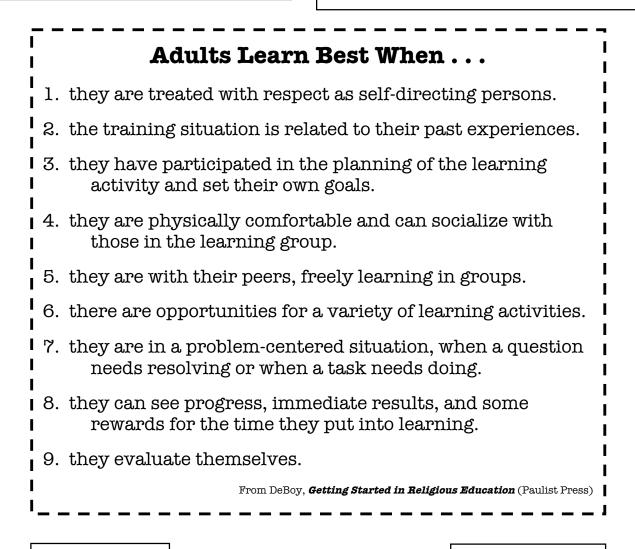
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Catholic Bible Institute
Diocese of Orange
September 5, 2015 – 9AM to 12N

Catechetical Documents of Interest to CBI

◆ *General Directory for Catechesis* (GDC)   (Vatican ©1997)-- #'s 172, 173, 175

◆ *National Directory for Catechesis* (NDC)   (USCCB © 2005) -- #48 A

◆ *Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us* (OHWB)   (USCCB © 1999) --#'s 81, 91, 98

Adults Learn Best When . . .

1. they are treated with respect as self-directing persons.

2. the training situation is related to their past experiences.

3. they have participated in the planning of the learning activity and set their own goals.

4. they are physically comfortable and can socialize with those in the learning group.

5. they are with their peers, freely learning in groups.

6. there are opportunities for a variety of learning activities.

7. they are in a problem-centered situation, when a question needs resolving or when a task needs doing.

8. they can see progress, immediate results, and some rewards for the time they put into learning.

9. they evaluate themselves.

From DeBoy, ***Getting Started in Religious Education*** (Paulist Press)

FACILITATOR	**← GROUP FACILITATION →**	**PARTICIPANT**
- Makes "easy" – Responsible for smooth running of group		Shares in helping group maintain healthy, fruitful discussion

1. Facilitating a Scripture-focused or lectionary-based faith-sharing group? **YES**
2. Or, facilitating Scripture Study sessions/series? **YES**
3. But, teaching a Scripture class? **NO** (need advanced degree or ABI)
4. There is a different dynamic for each type of format.

KEY POINTS TO CONSIDER

ONE: *In a faith-sharing group or study session, all members should draw on Gospel values, beliefs, and attitudes that can help them treat each other with trust, empathy, fairness and respect.*

TWO: *It is possible for members in a faith-sharing group or study session to have different, yet valid, perceptions of reality. An opposing view is not automatically an erroneous one.*

THREE: *Controversy is not a bad thing. Careful listening to another point of view can provide insight into a more complete examination of the topic.*

PARTICIPANT OR LEADER SKILLS

#1. Clarify the point being made by restating what you think you heard.

#2. Express agreement or partial agreement.

#3. Disagree gently.

#4. Move the group along.

#5. Acknowledge the emotion behind the statement.

#6. Use creative thinking and critical thinking skills.

THE BOTTOM LINE
The facilitator must claim his or her role and not give over to the loudest -- or neediest -- person in the room.

"13 Trends and Forces Affecting the Future of Faith Formation in a Changing Church and World" 2010 -2020 – with an ADDENDUM

(John Roberto – LifeLongFaith Associates – www.lifelongfaith.com)

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1. Declining Participation in Christian Churches

• **14.7% Americans at worship (down from 17.3 % in 2009)**

• **85 % Americans absent from worship**

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2. Growth in No Religious Affiliation

• **15% Americans claim no religious affiliation (doubled since 1990)**

• **Challenge to Christianity – not from other religions, but from rejection of all organized religion**

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3. Becoming More "Spiritual" and Less "Religious"

• **Current – 18% (18-39-year-olds) "spiritual but not religious"**

• **Decade ago – 11%**

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4. Influence of Individualism on Christian Identity and Community Life

• **Religious identity – more autonomous and deliberate**
• **Individualism – loss of how religion is anchored in belonging**
• **Communal/Institutional structures decline as part of religious identity**

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5. Increasing Social, Cultural, and Religious Diversity in the U.S.

• **2050 – white population no longer majority (47%)**
• **Minority ethnic groups will be majority**
• **More religious diversity – Protestants lose majority status**

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6. Growing Influence of Hispanic/Latino Religious Faith

• **Prevalence of spirit-filled religious expressions**

• **Ethnic-oriented worship**

7. **Identifying a New Stage of Life: "Emerging Adulthood" (18-30 year-olds)**

- **Concern with the new, different, alternative, etc.**
- **Avoid commitments that curtail options**
- **Weak ties to social institutions**

8. **The Rise of a Distinctive Post-Boomer [20's-40's] Faith and Spirituality**

- **Religious "Tinkering"**
- **"Expressive Communalism"**

9. **Changing Structures and Patterns of Family Life in the United States**

- **Delaying marriage**
- **Fewer children, later in life**
- **Decreasing Number of children in to-parent households**
- **Increasing time caring for children**

10. **Rediscovering the Impact of Parents and Families on Faith Practice**

- **Parent Influence**
- **Embedded family religious practices**

11. **Living in a Digital World**

- **Internet use increasing**
- **Social networking increasing**
- **More children online**
- **Churches embrace technology, including web sites**

12. **Educating in New Ways**

13. **Increasing Numbers of Adults 65 and Older**

- **65+ adult Americans outnumber teenagers two to one**
- **2050 – one-in-five over 65**
- **New stage of life – between mid-life and old age**
- **2/3 of 65+ adults – religion important**

AN ADDENDUM from two sources (1. Pew Research Center, and 2. Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate):

1. http://www.pewforum.org/2014/05/07/the-shifting-religious-identity-of-latinos-in-the-united-states

2. https://www.avemariapress.com/news/2015/7/6/hcfm-cara-study-family/

Who's Who and What's What?

WHO: HOWARD GARDNER   WHAT: MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

Gardner suggests that the traditional notion of intelligence, based on I.Q. testing, is too limited and proposes eight different intelligences to account for a broader range of human potential. He says we esteem linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligence and don't pay enough attention to those showing gifts in the other intelligences and defines intelligence as "the capacity to solve problems or to fashion products that are valued in one or more cultural setting."

Linguistic Intelligence	"Word Smart"	This involves having a mastery of language, including the ability to manipulate language effectively to express oneself rhetorically or poetically. Language can be used as a means to remember information.
Logical-Mathematical Intelligence	"Number/Reasoning Smart"	This consists of the ability to detect patterns, reason deductively and think logically. It is most often associated with scientific and mathematical thinking.
Spatial Intelligence	"Picture Smart"	This gives one the ability to manipulate and create mental images in order to solve problems. It is not limited to visual domains and is also formed in blind children.
Kinesthetic Intelligence	"Body Smart"	This is the ability to use one's mental abilities to coordinate one's own bodily movements, challenging the popular belief that mental and physical activity are unrelated.
Musical Intelligence	"Music Smart"	This is the capability to recognize and compose musical pitches, tones, and rhythms. Auditory functions are required to develop this in relation to pitch and tone but not for the knowledge of rhythm.
Interpersonal Intelligence	"People Smart"	This ability to interact with others, understand them, and interpret their behavior is not well developed in those who appear to be shy, introverted or even anti-social.
Intrapersonal Intelligence	"Self Smart"	This is our ability to understand our "self," allowing us to know our feelings and why we feel as we do. This can lead to a strength of character that can be used to solve internal problems
Naturalist Intelligence	"Nature Smart"	A recent addition to the list, it refers to the ability to identify and classify patterns in nature, which can be expressed by a strong commitment to the environment.

Research conducted in the USA by French, Gilley, and Cherry from 1975 to 1981 led to this theory. Perceptual learning styles are the means by which learners extract information from their surroundings, using the five senses. Individuals have different pathways by which they gain information. The seven pathways, or modes, are listed below.

PATHWAY (MODE)	REFERS TO . . .	DESCRIPTION
*VISUAL	Seeing Visual Depictions (e.g., pictures, graphs)	These learners like to observe people and situations. Usually must see something in order to learn. Often have a vivid imagination. Need something to watch and will drift away when extensive listening is required. As much as 80% of the population. Primary way of learning: most people in their 20's and over the age of 50.
*AURAL (AUDITORY)	Listening	These people learn best by listening carefully. Rarely speak out during a lecture; easily remember what they hear. Like to talk and enjoy plays, dialogs and drama. Research suggests10-12% of the population learns in this way.
INTERACTIVE	Verbalization	Learn best when verbalizing their thoughts and feelings. Like to use others as sounding boards; enjoy Q&A sessions. Find small group discussions stimulating/informative
HAPTIC (TACTILE)	Sense of Touch or Grasp	These people learn best through their sense of touch. They like a hands-on" approach to learning and enjoy artwork and piecing things together. They may be fond of doodling or "fiddling" with something.
*KINESTHETIC	Whole Body Movement	These people need to move in order to learn. They want to be "doing" something and are not very attentive to visual or auditory presentations. They want to try things out and use movement to help them concentrate, including doodling and tapping. Possible 2-3% of the population.
PRINT	Seeing Printed or Written Words	These people often learn best by reading and writing. This mode is related to visual learning and may be a conditioned learning because of their training in school. They often take notes and may like to write on the board. They can be perceived as "bookworms," and they remember quickly and easily what is read.
OLFACTORY	Sense of Smell and Taste	These people use their sense of smell or taste to learn. Research indicates that smell originates in the most primitive part of the brain and, therefore, is a powerful reminder of people or past events. They find that smells add to learning. Possibly 2-3 %of the population.

*Visual, Aural, Kinesthetic (see shaded boxes above) are thought to be the 3 primary learning styles, although some would add a 4th, Olfactory.

The Myers-Briggs Type inventory (MBTI) is an interest or preference inventory. It indicates – on a continuum – how, when given your preference, you like to take action. It has become the most widely used personality measure for non-psychiatric populations.

It is <u>extremely important</u> in this area to <u>define terms</u>:

ATTITUDINAL PREFERENCES

<u>Introvert</u>: *One who prefers to "think things out" before stating a conclusion.*
  (I)   An introvert thinks to speak. This person draws his/her energy from and relates more easily to the world of ideas than to the outer world of people and things.

<u>Extravert</u>: *One who prefers to "talk things out," often considering aloud all of the possibilities before stating a conclusion.* An extravert must speak to think. This person draws his/her energy from and relates more easily to the world of people and things than to the inner world of ideas.

PERCEIVING FUNCTIONS

<u>Sensate</u>: *One who bases consideration of the world around him/her on*
  (S)   *the five senses.* These people would rather work with known facts than look for possibilities and relationships.

<u>iNtuitive</u>: *One who considers the world around him/her on the basis of what*
  (N)   *the potential might be*
      These people would rather look for possibilities and relationships than work with known facts.

JUDGING FUNCTIONS

<u>Thinking</u>: *One who prefers a logical approach to making decisions.*
  (T)   Impersonal analysis and logic are more important than personal values when making judgments

<u>Feeling</u>: *One who makes decisions on the basis of how the situation feels to*
  (F)   *him/her.* Judgments are based more on personal values than on impersonal analysis and logic.

MODE OF ACTION

<u>Judging</u>: *One who prefers an orderly progression of events leading to a final*
  (J)   *outcome.* This person likes a planned, decided, orderly way of life better than a flexible, spontaneous one.

<u>Perceiving</u>: *One who prefers to let the final outcome emerge as a result of an*
  P)   *open-ended progression of events.* This person probably likes a flexible, spontaneous way of life better than a planned, decided,

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orderly one.

MBTI Characteristics

A. WHERE WE GET OUR LIFE ENERGY:

Extravert (E) ←---→ **Introvert (I)**

External	Internal
Outside thrust	Inside pull
Blurt it out	Keep it in
Breadth	Depth
Involved with people and things	Work with ideas and thoughts
Interaction	Concentration
Action	Reflection
Do – think – do	Think – do – think

B. HOW WE TAKE IN INFORMATION:

Sensate (S) ←---→ **iNtuitive (N)**

Five senses	"Sixth sense," hunches
What is real	What could be
Practical	Theoretical
Present-oriented	Future possibilities
Facts	Insights
Concerned with what is useful	Novelty
Step-by-step	Leap around
Detail	The big picture

C. HOW WE MAKE A JUDGMENT ABOUT WHAT IS TAKEN IN:

Thinking (T) ←---→ **Feeling (F)**

Head	Heart
Logical system	Value system
Objective	Subjective
Critique	Mercy
Principles	Compliment
Reason	Harmony
Firm, but fair	Empathy, compassion

D. HOW WE OPERATE IN OUR DAY-TO-DAY LIVES:

Judging (J) ←---→ **Perceiving (P)**

Plan	Spontaneous
Regulate	Flow
Control	Adapt
Settled	Tentative
Run one's life	Let life happen
Set goals	Gather information
Decisive	Open
Organized	Flexible

ASKING QUESTIONS . . .
. . .SOME IDEAS*

1. ***It is necessary to assume that the quietest of participants has an opinion, even if un-expressed.*** And sometimes it just needs to be left un-expressed.

2. ***Nothing particularly good is accomplished by putting a quiet or seemingly unresponsive participant on the spot in a kind of "deer-in-the-headlights" way.*** Some group facilitators like to catch participants off guard in this manner and force them to speak. Rarely a good idea! Humiliation is not an effective teaching method, especially when the facilitator should be modeling the compassion of Jesus!

3. ***Participants who are more reticent about expressing themselves in large groups find it easier and more inviting to ponder their own thoughts alone for a moment and then share them with one or two others before turning to the large group option. (Remember, God has made them this way; generally, they're not being deliberately contrary.)*** Here's where a process of moving from silent reflection to small group discussion (perhaps dyads) and, finally, to large group sharing can be very useful. It eases the more introverted participant into the discussion.

4. ***The goal of a Scripture-based faith sharing session is to find ways to help the participants make a connection between their own lives and the message of the Bible in order to nurture a relationship with Jesus Christ.*** The goal is not necessarily to have every participant speak aloud in a large group. A variety of ways, not just large group discussion, can be employed to make this process palatable for them.

5. ***It's important, when asking questions, to try to facilitate conversation <u>among</u> the members of the entire group about the topic.*** Try to avoid the trap of serial dialogues between the leader, on the one hand, and participants, on the other – back and forth, one-by-one. It's wise to remain the <u>facilitator</u>, not the repository of all the wisdom in the room – until necessary. Sometimes the leader learns more about what the participants are thinking by letting them discuss and agree or disagree (agreeably!) among themselves in a large group discussion where the leader takes a back seat and listens carefully.

6. ***Starting out with open-ended questions might bring about a better discussion.*** For example: "What did you notice in the scene where Jesus spoke with the Samaritan woman?" rather than "Why did Jesus challenge the Samaritan woman about her current live-in relationship?" If the participants think that there is only one option to explain Jesus' behavior (or that of any other character in Scripture, for that matter) and you have just alerted them to what it should be, they could hold back on expressing contrary opinions. It is very important for these contrary opinions to be aired, not stifled.

7. ***Some people are uncomfortable with questions that pointedly ask, "What do <u>you</u> think, Mary?" or "What would <u>you</u> do in a situation like this, John?"*** The risk here is that some participants will attempt to discover what the leader thinks and try to give the so-called "right" answer. Or, on the other hand, they could be so concerned about voicing an opinion opposite to what they think the leader wants to hear that they just clam up. Of course, this depends a lot on the level of trust that has been created between the participants and their leader. One does not have to eliminate this line of questioning entirely; rather, one needs to use it judiciously. However, It is not to be seen as the definitive way to go about inviting someone to contribute to a discussion.

8. ***When in doubt, try wording the questions this way:*** "What do people in today's world think about this? How do you think they would react?" or "What would people you know [no names] do here?" or "Can you think of more than one way to respond to this situation?" "What advice would you give?" Answering these kinds of questions may, indeed, allow a participant to surface his/her own thoughts in the guise of speaking generally and anonymously for others in the community.

9. ***In the ensuing discussion, make sure you don't express your own opinion too soon.*** Express it, by all means, but not so early in the lesson as to kill any developing conversations on the part of the participants.